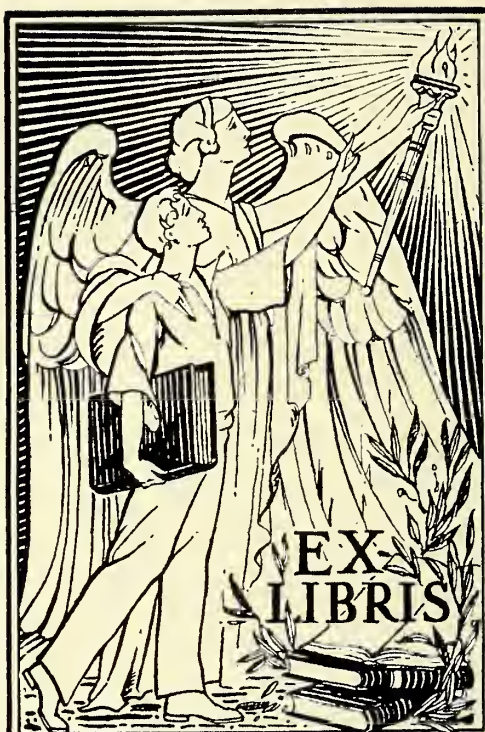


REPORT OF THE NATIONAL BRAILLE
PRESS, INC. FOR THE YEAR 1931
SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES, JANUARY 27th, 1932

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February
NATIONAL BRAILLE PRESS

110 Tremont St.

Boston

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL BRAILLE PRESS, INC. FOR THE YEAR 1931 SUBMITTED TO
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The year 1931 has now passed into history and with it the National Braille Press, Inc. has completed five years of service to the blind of these United States and Canada. The significance and value of this service is found in the many unsolicited letters which have come from its readers and which are full of appreciation and gratitude for the privilege of receiving the Weekly News and the Our Special which you have made possible for them. Its intrinsic worth to them cannot be estimated to you in dollars and cents. Neither can I portray for you in words the value of this service which you, and friends of the blind, have made possible through your generosity in supporting this enterprise.

Companionship is one of the most priceless possessions of man. There are three kinds of companions: men, women, and books, and one of the greatest of these is books.

In solitude they may be our dearest friends and in sorrow they may make us forget our suffering.

Literature exists not only to instruct and stimulate the mind, but to please. "ever, by its aid, need one be alone again.

The eager mind of man, always hungry, always searching, may be fed and may be strengthened to go on with courage.

His imagination is stimulated and he makes new contacts. If this is so for a seeing person, how much more of a necessity is it for those without sight.

While you can, at will, satisfy your tastes of reading books or periodicals, such is not the case with those who cannot see. At best, our secular periodicals in this country could be easily counted within the digits. Only one is a weekly. While, I am told, there are more than 1500 monthlies, over 1000 weeklies, and approximately 2200 dailies being published in ink-print, in this country, covering practically every phase of professional, technical, and pleasure reading, the field of braille journalism is very much restricted. This field can and should be extended to cover some of the more needed subjects.

The embossing of books into braille has been a slow and expensive process, but since the last session of Congress passed the bill appropriating \$100,000 annually for the printing of books into braille, now this field will be amply taken care of. It is hoped, however, that sufficient books will be embossed into braille to take care of the popular demand for light reading. The field of periodicals has not been so fortunate as to receive consideration by our Legislators, and we must continue to depend upon the philanthropy of those interested in our work. Whether or not some of this appropriation could be diverted in this field cannot be foretold at this time, but the demand for periodicals is growing, and the National

Braille Press, Inc., will do its share, I hope, towards helping in making the world of the blind compare favorably with that of his seeing brother.

During this year a great deal of effort was expended by this organization towards arranging to publish a braille book review for a group who is particularly interested in Literature. Our activities were suddenly halted when it was learned that one of the other braille publishing houses had already announced that in January, 1932, such a braille book review would be made available to those who wished to subscribe for it.

Since last Spring, about four pages of the Weekly News have been devoted to radio programs. In these pages, we have only been able to give, at the most, between five or six announcements. From time to time, the editor omitted these programs and each time he received strong protest from the readers not to discontinue this feature but to enlarge upon it if possible. In fact, many requests have come in for a possible weekly braille radiolog, giving the programs which occur upon the three key stations, as well as news features concerning the artists who are taking part in these programs. This would enable the blind reader to look up his own programs and help to add a little bit more to that independence which every normal blind person craves.

Another periodical which is greatly desired by a group who is interested in home teaching and social work has been under discussion for some little time. If this could be made possible, it would offer a medium through which the blind workers could discuss the "pro's" and "con's" of the problems arising in their work, as well as giving them an opportunity to read the same for themselves.

The American Printing House and the American Braille Press of Paris, besides many of the schools for the blind, have music departments for the transcription of music into braille. These departments have done much in this field, and a great deal of music in braille is now available. These various departments in printing their music have kept in mind the masses and have anticipated their needs and have printed what they thought would be wanted. The individual needs of the blind musician have not always been satisfactorily taken care of, and it is this type of service which is now being requested by those who are depending upon music for their livelihood. I believe that this organization can legitimately take care of this need. The difference between this type of service (~~which is now being requested by those who are depending upon music~~) and that which is now available is that the latter is a ready-made one, and the former a service to emboss music to order; thereby, reducing the handicap of the blind musician to a minimum.

Your manager has given a great deal of serious thought to the proposed additions to our work, and he is heartily in favor of establishing these new features. These particular features would differ from those of the Weekly News and the Our Special, inasmuch as they would not be absolutely free. Probably 80% of the cost would be levied on the readers as a subscription rate. The balance of 20% would be a subsidy which this organization could rightfully assume.

Statistics never add to the interest of a report, but often times it has been found necessary to give them in order that a written record can be made of the work accomplished by an organization. Our work this year has increased in volume; first, because of the added number of readers; second, by accepting the contract for printing the Jewish Braille Review. In all, we have embossed 1458 plates or 2916

metal pages. The circulation of the Weekly News began the year with 1885 copies a week, closing 1931 with 2476 copies a week. In all, 111,866 copies of this magazine were mailed to readers. Our Special began the year by mailing 1125 copies each month and closing with a total circulation of 1636. In all, 16,130 copies were mailed during the fiscal year. The printing of the Jewish Braille Review began in August, 1931, and up to date 2801 copies have been printed. This makes a grand total of 130,797 copies printed in the year 1931.

Our automatic presses have given a good account of themselves during the year, printing 4,852,032 pages. This, of course, includes all our periodicals.

The organization is beginning the year, 1932, without any indebtedness, and has a working balance on hand of \$932.81.

The budget estimate for the year, 1931, called for \$10,641 and was based on the total circulation of our magazines as per January 1 of that year. We used all but \$271.02 and at the same time increased the circulation of these magazines 40%. This year we have an estimated budget of \$13,512.97. This is \$2,871.97 over last year's estimate. This extra may be accounted for as follows: \$1,000 to take care of the cost of carrying on the three new features recommended in this report, if adopted; \$1,000 for equipment (the purchase of a graphotype and a stereotype machine), and the balance of \$871.97 to take care of a 20% increase for the coming year in the Weekly News and the Our Special.

It is particularly gratifying to note that in spite of the depression the contributions from the appeal this year were much greater than last year, and if the predictions of the future are governed by the success or failures of the past, it is reasonable to assume with some degree of confidence that the necessary funds will be raised in spite of existing conditions.

A request to the Massachusetts Association for the Blind has already been made for their annual contribution. No official word has been received from them, but there is every reason to believe that the request is being favorably considered and will be acted upon at their annual meeting this month.

No public appeal for funds has ever been made to our readers. Whatever they have contributed has been purely voluntary on their part, but this year an appeal will be presented to them, and it is hoped that at least \$1,000 can be raised through this source.

As yet no application has been made for assistance to the Worcester County Association, the Hyams Fund or to the Federal Government's appropriation of the \$100,000 granted annually for the printing of books. It has been learned that some of this appropriation has already been diverted for the printing of braille music. If this organization could obtain sufficient influence, it might be possible to interest Dr. Putnam of the Library of Congress, who has charge of spending this money, to make substantial annual contribution for this work inasmuch as this organization reaches by far the largest number of blind people in this country—with a possible exception of the Matilda Zeigler Publishing Company who already has a private endowment of more

than \$600,000.

As already stated in previous reports, our funds are being used to serve a double purpose: to educate, to inform, and to entertain the finger readers of these United States and Canada; and, to give employment to the blind. This year twelve blind people and four persons with full sight--three of whom have a blind member in their family--have been given employment.

The depression of the last two years has of necessity made everything more difficult than usual, so that even staying stationary might be considered progress, but we have by no means remained stationary, as this report shows. The success this organization has achieved could never have been accomplished without the whole-hearted support which it has received from you.

In closing may I be permitted to quote from a letter received from one of our appreciative readers, which I am sure expresses the sentiment of that particular group and gives us all a good word-picture of the full importance of this work which the National Braille Press, Inc. is carrying on.

"I appreciate your kindness in offering to send the Weekly News to the blind-deaf free of charge. I am writing this letter, therefore, to ask if you would kindly let me have the Weekly News, as I am blind, deaf, seriously crippled and an invalid besides, and comparatively few persons care to read papers to one who is so seriously handicapped, you know. I take great interest in everything that goes on in this world, but you understand how little we deaf-blind people get out of it when we can neither hear others read to us nor see to read things ourselves. I am so hungry for news and never get enough so it seems, so you know how greatly I shall appreciate the paper."

Respectfully submitted

Signed; F. B. Ierardi



